

THE CITIZEN

Vol. 33, No. 24

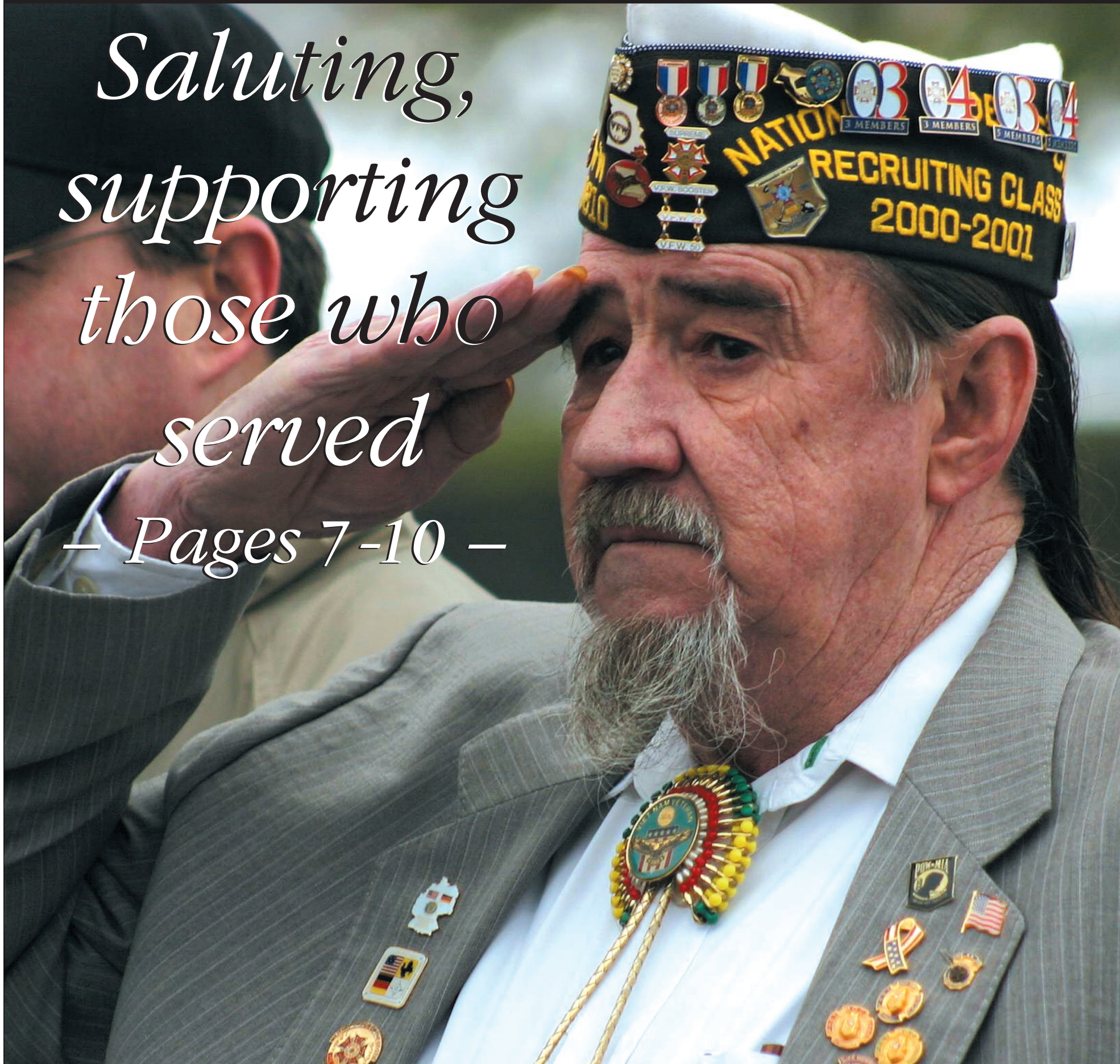
The 6th Area Support Group Newspaper

Nov. 30, 2004

Stuttgart, Oberammergau and Garmisch, Germany

*Saluting,
supporting
those who
served*

— Pages 7-10 —



Hugh C. McBride

Jerald Stottlemire, a member of American Legion Stuttgart Post 6, salutes the flag during the Nov. 11 Veterans Day ceremony on Patch Barracks. The Legion is one of several organizations in Stuttgart that support the area's many veterans and their families.

INSIDE THIS EDITION



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Patch students AVID about education

Patch High School's Advancement Via Individual Determination class offers students a unique path to success.



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Markets offer samples of season's splendor

Christmas markets in the Stuttgart area and throughout Germany bring the holiday alive for area residents and guests.

Thorns 'n Roses

From community submissions



Roses to:

The many, many organizations and individuals who donated their time, talents and efforts to make the German-American Women's Club's 2004 Pfennig Bazaar such an overwhelming success. So many community members did so much – and every gesture was appreciated.

Thorns to:

The individuals who make the Pfennig Bazaar volunteers' efforts much more difficult by making messes like the one shown below in the on-post sorting rooms.



For more about the 2004 Pfennig Bazaar – and the effort to improve the state of affairs in the sorting rooms – see the Dec. 14 edition of *The Citizen*.

E-mail comments to citizen@6asg.army.mil or fax them to 421-2570/civ. 0711-729-2570.

THE CITIZEN

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www.stuttgart.army.mil

Vets' service doesn't stop when the uniform comes off

By Hugh C. McBride
Commentary

Some people just don't know when to quit. Take Len Lomell, for example. As a 24-year-old, Lomell hit the Normandy coast of France with the 2nd Ranger Division in the early hours of June 6, 1944.

In one of the more audacious missions of that historic day, Lomell and his fellow Rangers were tasked with scaling the virtually vertical 100-meter cliffs of Pointe du Hoc to neutralize German guns that U.S. intelligence feared could annihilate invading troops on both Omaha and Utah beaches.

In the face of withering German fire, the Rangers did the impossible – they conquered the cliffs, they found the guns (which had been moved) and they destroyed them.

And then they waited. Alone.

In the chaos of the D-Day attack, the Rangers' reinforcements had been sent elsewhere, leaving the surviving 100 Soldiers (out of an initial force of 250) to fend for themselves – with little ammunition and next to no food – for two days as the Germans mounted a series of counterattacks.

By the time backup arrived June 8, the invasion force had sustained a 70-percent casualty rate while fending off five counterattacks. But it had prevailed.

Lomell, who had discovered the guns and led the attack force that destroyed them, would find his way into the history books as one of the heroes of D-Day.

(Forty years later, a conversation he had with Tom Brokaw in a small boat just off the coast of Pointe du Hoc would inspire the newsman to begin work on his eventual best-seller, "The Greatest Generation.")

But what is perhaps most amazing about Lomell is that, to those who know him best, his service in World War II is not the most amazing thing he ever did.

I had the honor of being on Pointe du Hoc June 6, 2004, when Lomell and seven other D-Day Rangers returned as guests of honor at a 60th anniversary ceremony a few hundred meters from those imposing cliffs.

After the formalities were over, the veterans led a group to the stone obelisk that memorializes the spot where they summited.

As Lomell held court from the point of the cliffs, regaling family members, friends and fellow Rangers with his recollections of that day, I had the opportunity to spend a few moments with his daughter, Georgine Buckwalter, who told me a few things about her father that don't show up in the history books.

After the war, Buckwalter said, Lomell returned to the States, graduated from law school, passed the bar and began a distinguished career as an attorney.

During his legal career, he took "many unpopular stances," his daughter said, recalling her father's advocacy of civil rights and defense of academic freedom. "He did this in the '50s, before the civil rights movement," Buckwalter noted. "He was brave his whole life. ... When he leaves this world, a lot of light will leave with it."

The image of a grizzled war hero protecting a communist-leaning professor's right to be heard may be difficult for some to understand, but for the hero's daughter, the latter action was a logical extension of the former: "He continued to defend," she said.

Walking with Buckwalter across the scarred earth of Pointe du Hoc, hearing her tales of her "very strict and very loving" father – the one who inspired her to pursue a career as an Episcopal minister – and watching the awe with which the active-duty Rangers in the crowd beheld their historic predecessors, I was struck by the many, many ways in which our nation's veterans continue to serve.

The paragraphs above describe one image from one of the most memorable weeks I have ever spent – but the truth is, I didn't need to go to Normandy to witness inspiring service on the part of U.S. military veterans.

I see it every time I walk into the Retiree Support Center on Patch Barracks. An all-volunteer effort, the Support Center's official mandate is to serve as a conduit between the area's retirees, family members and survivors – but I can assure you that no mission statement could ever adequately

express what the center's staff members mean to the men and women they serve.

The center is "officially" open eight hours a week, but in reality Paul Sklar, who has been the center's director since its inception a little over seven years ago, is never off duty.

From helping a retiree navigate a maze of paperwork, to arranging a dignified burial for a fallen comrade, to simply offering a word of encouragement or a shoulder to cry on for a surviving spouse, Paul and his fellow volunteers on the Support Center staff are available whenever the need arises – and are constant reminders that, quite simply, the best Soldiers never stop serving.

I see this dedication to community whenever I'm lucky enough to run into Bob Gambert. Bob has retired twice (once from the Army, once from Patch High School), but he's still one of the busiest people I know. (The difference, as he'll tell you with a smile, is that now he's busy doing the things he wants to do, not the things he has to do.)

Luckily for the members of the Stuttgart military community, one of the things that Bob wants to do most of all is serve others.

The conversations I have with him inevitably include at least two topics: an update on the ridiculous number of kilometers he's walked since we last spoke (a former marathon and 10K champion, Bob is now a hardcore volksmarmer), and an appeal on behalf of someone else.

A member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Association of the U.S. Army and probably every other vet-related organization you can think of, Bob redefines "tireless" in his efforts on behalf of his fellow service members and fellow community members.

For example, because of Bob's effort and enthusiasm a number of Stuttgart-area youth have been recognized and rewarded over the years for their participation in the Legion's "Voice of Democracy" and "Patriot's Pen" contests.

It's hard to make it through a week without hearing about how "these kids today" don't have the respect/dedication/appreciation they should for the many blessings bestowed upon them by their U.S. citizenship, but I can tell you that some of "these kids" have exactly that – and that's due at least in part because they were fortunate enough to cross paths with Bob Gambert.

I see a similar dedication to the future in the eyes of Jack Goldman. Like Bob Gambert, Jack is a retired warrant officer whose post-military career involves Patch High School (he teaches the PHS Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program.)

As a former teacher myself, I can assure you that the job is not for the faint of heart – and I can guarantee you that my retirement fantasies have *never* involved standing back in front of the chalkboard. Thankfully, though, men like Jack Goldman are immune from such selfishness.

In addition to their classroom instruction, Jack's charges also attend a number of services and ceremonies both on and off post. For years, JROTC color guards have represented the Stuttgart military community at the annual graveside memorial service for Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, and have stood beside French and U.S. delegations amid the 10,489 graves in Lorraine American Cemetery in St. Avold, France.

As recently as Nov. 11, four JROTC members served as the color guard for Stuttgart's Veterans Day ceremony.

If you were at that ceremony, you saw dedication, devotion and military precision – and if you were there 30 minutes before the ceremony, you saw Jack Goldman drilling the guard members over and over to ensure that their effort was commensurate to the moment. (It was.)

As with Len Lomell, perhaps the most amazing thing about Paul Sklar, Bob Gambert and Jack Goldman is how "ordinary" their efforts are. Far from being three "candles in the darkness," they are instead three of probably thousands of stories of men and women in the Stuttgart area who stopped wearing the uniform of their nation, but never ceased serving their communities.

Earlier this month, we paused for a few moments to thank them for what they did. Today, I'd like to take a moment to appreciate who they are.



Members of the Relocation and Family Support working group evaluate issues during Stuttgart's 2004 Army Family Action Plan Conference. The area's next AFAP conference is Jan. 27 in the Swabian Special Events Center on Patch Barracks.

Got issues? Get AFAP!

January event to address quality-of-life concerns on area installations

By Hugh C. McBride

If you've got a gripe about life in the Stuttgart military community, Lori Everly wants to hear it. Be forewarned, though – there's a crucial "catch." All grievances must be accompanied by suggestions about how to improve the situation for the betterment of all who live and work here.

Everly is the coordinator of the 6th Area Support Group's Army Family Action Plan conference, an annual event dedicated to the evaluation and improvement of quality of life for the community's service members and civilians.

The 2005 AFAP conference is slated for Jan. 27 in the Swabian Special Events Center, and Everly is on the lookout for concerned community members who would like to help make Stuttgart a better place.

"AFAP is a grassroots process for individuals to elevate issues to command and make recommendations for resolution," Everly said. "But AFAP only works if we know what our community members want."

Focus on community

AFAP conference attendees are organized into working groups to focus on specific areas of interest within the community. For example, working groups at previous conferences have included Consumer Services, Medical and Dental Services, Relocation Services and Youth and Education Services.

The groups spend the morning of the conference compiling and prioritizing concerns within their focus areas. After lunch, the delegates work with subject-matter experts to propose concrete, measurable solutions to what they believe to be the three most pressing issues.

At the end of the Jan. 27 conference, each group will present its "top three" issues and proposed solutions to representatives of the 6th Area Support Group command group.

Armywide impact

Issues that fall within the scope of authority of the 6th ASG command group will be assigned to the appropriate department for evaluation and follow-up, Everly said.

Recommendations that exceed local authority will be forwarded to AFAP conferences on the U.S. Army, Europe, or Headquarters, Department of the Army, levels.

Since its inception in 1983, the AFAP process has brought 568 issues to the attention of the Army's senior leadership via Department of the Army-level AFAP conferences, Everly said.

The result of this effort has included 92 changes to legislation, 134 revised policies or regulatory changes and 153 new or improved programs or services.

You can make a difference

Volunteers are still needed for the 2005 Army Family Action Plan conference **Jan. 27, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**, in Patch Barracks' Swabian Special Events Center.

For more information call 430-7176/civ. 0711-680-7176 or e-mail everlyl@6asg.army.mil.

A-F-A-P spells results

Community AFAP conferences are annual events – but that doesn't mean that the program is only a once-a-year undertaking.

After they are presented to the 6th Area Support Group command group at the end of an AFAP conference, each working group's top three issues and recommendations are forwarded to the appropriate agency or organization for evaluation and implementation.

(The only exception to this procedure is for issues that are determined to exceed local authority, which are forwarded to higher-level AFAP conferences.)

The issue-resolution process is overseen by the AFAP steering committee, which meets quarterly to monitor progress and document results.

During the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2004, the following Stuttgart-area AFAP issues were registered as "complete" by the local steering committee:

- Issue 6-01-14: **Community Resource Awareness**
- Issue 6-03-32: **Mandatory Patient Visitation**
- Issue 6-03-36: **Environment for Teens at Youth Services**
- Issue 6-03-41: **Insufficient Picnic Facilities**
- Issue 6-03-35: **Fitness Supervision and Safety**
- Issue 6-04-42: **TKS Customer Service Inadequate**
- Issue 6-04-49: **Inadequate Entitlements for Long-Term Reservists**

For a complete record of the resolution progress for all area AFAP issues, visit www.stuttgart.army.mil. Select "Army Community Service," then click "Army Family Action Plan."

News & Notes

Food drive helps hungry

The 52nd Signal Battalion is sponsoring a holiday food drive through Dec. 15. Drop boxes are located on all Stuttgart-area installations in commissaries, exchanges and shoppettes as well as the PowerZone on Patch Barracks.

Donated items will be distributed to needy families throughout the Stuttgart military community to ensure that all can enjoy the upcoming holiday season.

For more information call Sgt. 1st Class Xavier Myers at 430-7043/civ. 0711-680-7043 or 0160-531-4598.

Holiday volunteers needed

• From room decorating to gift sorting, **Army Community Service** needs your help to make this holiday season a success. Volunteers are needed throughout December to help with communitywide events and programs that will brighten the season.

For more information call Brooke McNally at 430-7176/civ. 0711-680-7176.

• Ready for your presents to arrive? The **Stuttgart Army Airfield** needs your help with package sorting and processing.

For details call Sgt. 1st Class Miskel at 421-4149/civ. 0711-729-4149.

Events, functions require FP plan

A force protection assessment plan should be completed for all off-post official and U.S.-sponsored events.

Organizers of unofficial, off-post events involving 50 or more individuals should also complete a force protection plan.

The organizers should then contact the 6th Area Support Group Force Protection Office at 421-2860/civ. 0711-729-2860 to review the plan.

Boy Scouts selling Christmas trees

The annual Boy Scout Christmas tree sale is underway next to the Patch Barracks tennis courts.

Trees may be purchased Mondays to Fridays, 4 to 7 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., through Dec. 17.

Support your local Boy Scout troops and find the perfect tree for your home. For details call Martha Povich at 430-7270/civ. 0711-680-7270.

Child Find screenings on RB

Child Find screenings for children ages 3 to 5 will be held Dec. 10 in Robinson Barracks Elementary School.

The program helps identify developmental delays in a child's speech, language abilities, cognitive and social skills, and large and small muscle groups.

For more information or to make an appointment call Suzy Boggs at 430-5200/civ. 0711-680-5200.

Oliver! premieres on Kelley

The colorful characters of Charles Dickens' classic novel "Oliver Twist" come to life in the Stuttgart Theatre's presentation of Oliver! Dec. 3, 4, 10 and 11, 7:30 p.m.; and Dec. 5, 11 and 12, 3 p.m.

The cost is \$14 for adults and \$12 for students and children. For more information call the Entertainment Branch Tuesdays to Fridays, 12:30 to 5:30 p.m. at 421-2825/civ. 0711-729-2825 or visit www.kelleytheatre.de.

Special Forces recruiting

Are you interested in becoming a Green Beret?

The Special Forces Team Europe is accepting applications for qualified E-4s through E-7s and 1st lieutenants in any military occupational specialty.

For more information or to apply call 379-6558/civ. 06202-25-825 or e-mail Sfirt-eur@hq.1perscom.army.mil.

Comedy show coming to Patch

Comedians Ced Delaney and Ronnie Jordan will perform Dec. 4, 7 to 9 p.m., in the Patch Barracks Community Club.

Delaney is a regular guest on Black Entertainment Television's "Comic View" and Jordan was crowned the 2001 "Rookie of the Year" by the Uptown Comedy Corner in Atlanta.

The cost is \$30 in advance or \$35 at the door and includes a meal. For ticket information call 0160-664-4468 or 0160-9390-8868.

YS hosts 'Harvest Luncheon'

Story and photo by
Jen Stephan

Juicy smoked turkey, home-made mashed potatoes with gravy, chilled cranberry sauce and buttery corn on the cob – these dishes plus a lot more filled out a menu that had several in attendance at the Garmisch Youth Services Nov. 16 Harvest Luncheon patting sated tummies and loosening suddenly too-tight belts.

Held in honor of Native American Heritage Month, the luncheon's main focus was on togetherness.

"The idea was to bring children together with their parents and the [Youth Service] staff in a family-like setting as the pilgrims and the Native Americans came together," said Melanie Resto, facility coordinator and program director for Garmisch's Child and Youth Services.

The theme of the luncheon was well received by the parents in attendance. Karen and Mark Brewer sat next to their 5-year-old daughter, Pasha. "The most important thing to us is what it would mean [to Pasha] if we didn't come to share this with her," Mark Brewer said.

Another idea behind the event was to include the children enrolled at Youth Services in the process of planning and cooking the meal. "It was a lot of fun cooking the corn and gravy," said Tess Chaffin, 8.

While Tess was helping out with the gravy, Youth Service's



Garmisch YS assistant Urszula Boni serves lunch to some hungry youngsters during the Nov. 16 Harvest Luncheon.

cook, Simon Leighton, could have used some extra help with the turkey. "It's the first turkey I've ever cooked," said Leighton, an Australian native, "so it's been a bit of a trial and error, but it seemed to have worked out."

If the number of people returning for seconds was any indication, Leighton's effort was a successful one. As 10-year-old Darby Oehl put it, "The food was so tasty. My favorite thing was the turkey!"

For more about Garmisch Youth Service call 440-2881/civ. 08821-750-881 or e-mail melanie.resto@us.army.mil.

Art Gallery opens on Artillery Kaserne

By Jen Stephan

When AAFES approached gallery owner Gabi Hoffman with the idea of setting up a small version of her successful downtown store in the mall on Artillery Kaserne, she thought it a wonderful idea. "It's a good atmosphere here, and my customers are able to buy [my products] more cheaply because they don't have to pay [the sales] tax," Hoffman said.

"They have a nice set-up and selection and the prices are very reasonable," said Brigitte Wilk, who stopped by to have a look.

The Art Gallery, located on the second floor of the AAFES Mall, offers a variety of seasonal gift ideas and local treasures. There are beautiful Santas and ornaments for the holiday season and calendars for the upcoming year.

Available artwork includes original art and cards crafted by local artisans, posters done in the style of the twenties and thirties of the Garmisch-Partenkirchen area bahns and landmarks, reproductions of famous paintings and even an etching or two from the 1800s.

"If you don't see [a print] in the store, we can order it for you from our extensive catalog," Hoffman said. Though several prints come pre-framed, custom framing requests can be filled through The Art Gallery's main store in downtown Garmisch. Work is currently being displayed in the newly-opened Edelweiss Hotel.

"The people here have been very friendly and we feel very welcome," Hoffman said.

Operating hours for the store are Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 5 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

White Eagle troupe shares culture through dance

Story & photo by Jen Stephan

Those who sat in the darkened Garmisch Players' Community Theater Nov. 12 found themselves transported from modern day Southern Germany to the Americas of more than a hundred years ago.

In honor of Native American Heritage Month – and sponsored by Armed Forces Entertainment – the White Eagle Dancers displayed two integral aspects of their culture: dance and song.

"It's a great honor to share our culture with others," said the troupe's founder, Charles Duncan, who has been performing Native American dances since 1949.

"Any time you can break down a barrier between various cultures, it brings love and understanding," Duncan said. "We are all, after all, under the same sky."

"I love [the show]," said Arts and Crafts Director Michelle Schneider. "It's done in a professional way, the costumes are just exquisite and the children really love it also."

The show began with a mesmerizing flute performance by Navaho Lowery Begay.

Begay first explained that the instrument's haunting dual tones were used for various things from "meditation among the Cherokee to courting among the Sioux," then he romanced his audience with the Sioux version.

Not content to merely have their audience enthralled, the White Eagle Dancers also wanted them involved, urging both

"Any time you can break down a barrier between various cultures, it brings love and understanding.

We are all, after all, under the same sky."

Charles Duncan
White Eagle Dancers

adults and children to join them onstage.

"I really liked the snake dance the best," said 8-year-old Brett Wisti, who was one of the lucky children called up on stage to dance a serpentine version of "follow the leader" with the entire dance troupe. "It really was kind of hard because you had to move so slow," he said.

Not so slow were the moves by award-winning dancer Jason Bender, who first performed the Men's Traditional Dance alone and then teamed up for a heart-stopping version of a war dance with Men's Fancy Dance champion, Lowery Begay.

"I have a newfound respect for the Native American culture," said first-time audience member George L. Degrella, Armed Forces Entertainment's Europe/Balkans regional entertainment coordinator.

"They bring the spirit with them," said audience member Linda Shaw. "Their heart was in everything – it wasn't just for show."



Lowery Begay, a Navaho member of the White Eagle Dancers, performs the Ring Dance Nov. 12 on Artillery Kaserne. With members from a variety of Native American nations, the White Eagle Dancers added elements of realism, entertainment and education to the area's Native American heritage celebration.

Settlement says: Scouts stay

DoD permitted to continue support of Boy Scouts, but commands cannot officially sponsor units

Army News Service

The partial settlement of lawsuit against the Department of Defense allows the military to continue supporting the Boy Scouts of America, as long as commands don't officially sponsor Scout units.

The lawsuit, which was filed by the American Civil Liberties Union in 1999 and settled Nov. 15, alleges that the Boy Scouts religiously discriminate because the Scout Oath requires youth swear to do their duty to God and country.

The partial settlement requires Pentagon leadership to issue a letter reminding commands of its policy: DoD and its personnel can't sponsor non-federal organizations while in their official capacity.

The ACLU also pointed out that the Pentagon donates approximately \$2 million to the Boy Scouts for their quadrennial national Jamboree, which will be held this year July 25 to Aug. 3 at Fort A.P. Hill.

"The Boy Scout Jamboree will still go on as scheduled at Fort A.P. Hill," said Defense Department spokesman Lt. Col. Joe Richard. "We are still fully supporting the Boy Scouts. But, we are reminding base commanders and post officials they can't sponsor non-federal organizations in their official capacity. It's not a new policy, but we are reminding people."

A Pentagon news release states, "The settlement does not prohibit the Defense Department from supporting the Boy Scouts of America. Boy Scout units are permitted to meet on military bases and military personnel are allowed to remain active in Boy Scout programs. Under the very limited settlement, applying the existing policy, the Defense Department may not officially sponsor Boy Scout units and personnel may not sponsor Boy Scout units in an official capacity. [This] prohibits official sponsorship to all private organizations, not just the Boy Scouts."

The ACLU said the Boy Scouts' policy violates the religious freedoms of those who don't wish to swear to a religious oath— and the government's relationship with the

We are still fully supporting the Boy Scouts. But, we are reminding base commanders and post officials they can't sponsor non-federal organizations in their official capacity. It's not a new policy, but we are reminding people.

Lt. Col. Joe Richard
Department of Defense

Boy Scouts directly links it with the Boy Scouts' discrimination.

Bob Bork, a Boy Scouts of America spokesman, said the Boy Scouts is a multi-religious organization, not a Christian-only group. He said they recognize just about every religion. But, he acknowledged, the Boy Scouts require a belief in a god, so atheists are not allowed to join.

The settlement does not prohibit off-duty government employees from sponsoring Boy Scout troops on their own time, officials said. They said the Boy Scouts will still also have access to military facilities available to other non-governmental organizations.

Aside from this week's agreement, the full lawsuit is still pending. In the lawsuit, the American Civil Liberties Union claims the Pentagon and the Housing and Urban Development Department violated the First Amendment's establishment clause by spending appropriated funds to support the Scouts.

The national Boy Scout Jamboree takes place every four years at Fort A. P. Hill's 76,000-acre installation, which has served as the site since 1981. The Boy Scouts use approximately 3,000 acres of land to house the 40,000 scouts and leaders who attend the event.

Engineers construct support facilities, Signal Soldiers establish communication nodes — most support of the jamboree is training that helps Soldiers when they deploy to combat zones, an Army spokesman said.

A story written by Chris Walz for the Pentagon newspaper was the foundation of this article.

Army tests vaccine half-doses

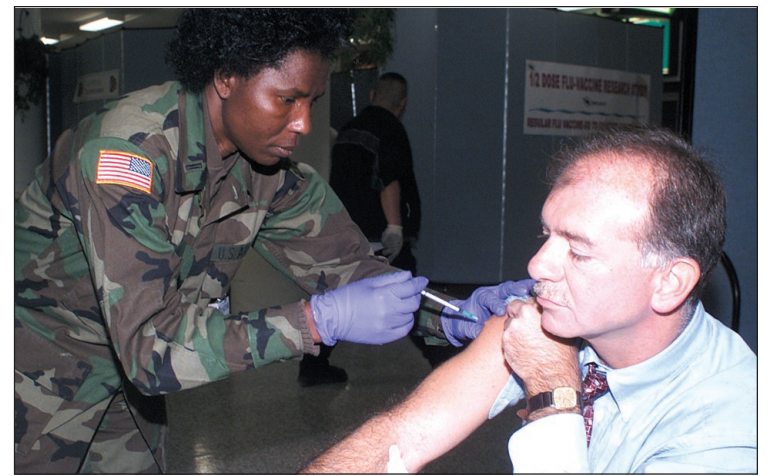
Story & photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Tammy M. Jarrett
Army News Service

Arrmy researchers are studying whether half doses of vaccine can prevent flu in healthy Pentagon volunteers.

The study, conducted by the Allergy-Immunology Department and Vaccine Healthcare Centers Network at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, in cooperation with the Department of Health and Human Services, compares the immune responses of participants who receive half-doses of vaccine with those who receive full doses.

The purpose of the study isn't to prove that a half dose is the same, but to prove that it isn't inferior to a full dose, said Maj. Molly Klote, research fellow at the Allergy-Immunology Department at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

If immune responses are similar in the two groups, U.S. health-care providers may be able to respond to future vaccine short-



A Pentagon volunteer receives a flu shot as part of an Army study on the effectiveness of half-doses of the vaccine.

ages by giving healthy people half doses. This would allow protection of twice as many people during shortages or epidemics.

While other half-dose studies have been done, more data is needed to apply results to the population as a whole, officials said. The Army study is looking at additional age groups, numbers of clinic visits and other health

outcomes of the participants

The vaccine used in the study is the same U.S. vaccine that is currently available for high-risk individuals. The study will use less than one-tenth of a percent of the flu vaccine DoD is allotted for this flu season, officials said.

For more information visit www.vaccines.mil.



Tech. Sgt. Sean P. Houlihan (American Forces Press Service)

Medal of Honor recipient George Lang, who earned the military's top honor for service while a specialist fourth class in Vietnam, presents a Medal of Honor coin to Staff Sgt. Joe Bowser before the opening of Smithsonian Institution's "The Price of Freedom: Americans at War" exhibit Nov. 10 in Washington, D.C. With Bowser are Sgt. Orlando Gill and Cpl. Arkin Colton, all of whom are patients at Walter Reed Medical Center.

Smithsonian salutes veterans

U.S. military heroes of past, present, attend opening of 'Price of Freedom' exhibit

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

Heroes of the past met the heroes of today during the Nov. 10 dedication ceremony for the Smithsonian Institution's exhibition, "The Price of Freedom: Americans at War."

Before the event began, Soldiers who were undergoing treatment at Walter Reed Army Medical Center for wounds sustained in Iraq met nine Medal of Honor recipients.

'The honor is mine'

"It's a honor to meet you, sir," said a young 2nd Infantry Division soldier to Army Maj. Al Rascon.

"No, corporal. The honor is mine," replied the man who received the Medal of Honor for his actions in Vietnam.

"It's always humbling to be around these heroes," said Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Richard B. Myers.

The global war on terror was not far from anyone's mind at the dedication.

"All have paid a price for our freedom and the freedom of millions around the globe," Myers said. "I think if you talk to our troops who have served in Afghanistan and Iraq, you'll see that they really understand what our freedom is worth. They make me proud to wear this uniform."

Finding the face of America

The exhibition has more than 850 artifacts, but it is not the things that tell the stories; rather, it is the people.

"That is the gift of this exhibition," said Homeland Secu-

The people whose stories that are told in this exhibit – and the countless American graves around the world – serve as reminders of the willingness to bear this burden of defending liberty.

Gen. Richard B. Myers

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

rity Secretary Tom Ridge. "It tells a story that is uniquely American and that will embolden and enlighten as only the American experience can."

Ridge asked people to look at the faces in the photographs in the exhibition.

"It is there that you will find the real story of America," he said. "Because while the uniforms and weaponry of war have changed over the years, the people and the Soldiers of this great republic have not."

Ridge said the exhibition depicts the legacy of freedom handed down by veterans, and that Americans are not about to let that legacy be dishonored. He said Americans will continue to do everything to protect freedom.

"We will meet brutality with justice, we will protect our people with all our effort," Ridge said. "We will live in free-

dom and we will never let that freedom go."

A legacy carried on

Myers said America's sons and daughters have indeed paid a high price for freedom.

"We must remember that war is never glorious, that it is a terrible thing, and brutal and tragic," he said.

"And many of you in this audience know it firsthand," Myers continued. "But the flag behind me and the people whose stories that are told in this exhibit – and the countless American graves around the world – serve as reminders of the willingness to bear this burden of defending liberty."

"As chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," Myers continued, "I can tell you that this legacy is being carried on very honorably by our current generation of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen."

‘Bands of brothers’ continue to serve

Local, national organizations support veterans, serve community



[Above] A group of Korean War veterans (including James W. Johnson, the current commander of Stuttgart's VFW chapter, left) salute the colors during the July 25, 2003, dedication ceremony for the area's Korean War memorial on Patch Barracks.

[Left] Fred Wildi, former commander of Stuttgart's American Legion chapter, speaks during the community's POW/MIA Remembrance Day ceremony Sept. 19, 2003, on Patch Barracks.



Support services for Stuttgart-area veterans and retirees

American Legion Stuttgart Post 6

- Commander: George Johnston
- Meetings: Second Wednesday of each month, 6 p.m., in the Patch Community Club.
- 430-5371/civ. 0711-680-5371
- www.legion.org, www.post6.org

Army Community Service

- Patch Barracks, building 2307 (Washington Center), second floor
- 430-7176/civ. 0711-680-7176

Association of the U.S. Army

- David Beckner
- beckner.dandr@t-online.de
- www.ausa.org

Retiree Council

- President: William Torbett
- Visit or contact Stuttgart's Retiree Support Center for more information

Retiree Support Center

- Director: Paul Sklar
- Patch Barracks, building 2318
- Open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to noon and 2 to 4 p.m.
- 430-7208/civ. 0711-680-7208
- E-mail: retired@6asg.army.mil

Veterans of Foreign Wars Stuttgart Post 10810

- Commander: James W.
- Meetings: Third Sunday of every month, 1 p.m., in the Patch Community Club
- Web sites: www.vfw.org

Web sites

- U.S. Department of Defense – www.defenselink.mil
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – www.va.gov

Story & photos by Hugh C. McBride

Bob Gambert can summarize this entire story in three words.

“Veterans serving veterans,” said Gambert, a retired warrant officer and current member of a number of veteran-related organizations in the Stuttgart military community. “That’s what it’s all about.”

In truth, it’s about a little bit more than that. In addition to maintaining a support network for former service members and their families, the area’s veterans also expend considerable time and energy on behalf of the greater community.

Gambert is one of the thousands of veterans and retirees who decided to stay in Germany after they separated from the service. Their reasons for staying are as varied and personal as the vets themselves (though job opportunities and German spouses are among the most common) but for many, their commitment to community – and to each other – is as strong as the day they enlisted.

“This is our home now,” Gambert said. “We’ve got to stay involved.”

Mutual helpfulness

For many of the vets, that involvement starts with membership in one (or both) of two local chapters of national veterans organizations: the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Eighty-five years after it adopted a constitution pledging “to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness,” the American Legion is the nation’s largest veterans’ group, with nearly three million members in 15,000 posts worldwide.

In Stuttgart, American Legion Post 6 is led by Commander George Johnston. Its members’ efforts on behalf of the community range from support of the local Boy Scouts and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps program to advocacy on behalf of the area’s retirees – and of course include the popular Sunday morning pancake breakfasts in the Patch Community Club.

“We try to look out for the retired veterans in the community,” Johnston said. “[But] we also have a close relationship with the Scouts and the JROTC.”

As it does worldwide, the Legion is also “the keeper of flag etiquette” in Stuttgart, Johnston said – an effort that involves educating individuals on the proper care and display of the national emblem as well as conducting ceremonies to destroy flags in a dignified manner.

In addition to playing an integral role in many local observances – including ceremonies on POW/MIA Recognition Day, Memorial Day, and Veterans Day – Post 6 and Stuttgart’s VFW Post 10810 have also been active in support of service members involved in the global war on terrorism.

“We all sponsor efforts to provide morale and comfort items to [injured] service members in Landstuhl,” Johnston said. “And we also send care packages to any service members from the Stuttgart area who are deployed downrange.”

With much of the world’s attention focused on events in Iraq, Johnston said, the Stuttgart-area veterans make an effort to ensure that those who served in previous wars – as well as their widows or families – are not forgotten.

“We kind of go out of our way to find them and offer our support,” he said. One demonstration of this support, he said, is to ensure that German widows of U.S. service members are visited and that those service members’ graves are adorned with flags on appropriate holidays.

Honoring the dead by helping the living

With more stringent eligibility requirements than the American Legion (based upon when and where an individual served), the VFW is the smaller of the two groups. But fewer members

by no means translates to reduced significance.

The VFW’s 9,000 posts – and more than 2.4 million members – meet a mandate similar to that of the American Legion: support of veterans coupled with service to community. (The VFW’s motto is “Honoring the dead by helping the living.”)

Two of the VFW’s more prominent undertakings are the Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition and Patriot’s Pen Essay Contest for high school and middle school students, respectively.

VFW Post 10810 has sponsored a number of successful Stuttgart-area students in both of these contests, including Patch High School’s Joe Morrow, who was the 2003 VOD European champion, an accomplishment that earned him a trip to Washington, D.C. for the national finals.

Stuttgart-area VFW members are also active participants in the “buddy poppy” program, which helps fund the VFW’s effort to support rehabilitation and service programs for veterans.

Proceeds from the “buddy poppies” – which are assembled by patients in Veterans Administration facilities – also contribute to upkeep on the VFW National Home for orphans and widows of our nation’s veterans.

Post 10810 is led by Commander James W. Johnson.

A one-of-a-kind resource

In addition to hosting local chapters of national veterans organizations, Stuttgart is also home to a unique service for former military members: the Retiree Support Center on Patch Barracks.

“This is the only office like it in the world,” said Paul Sklar, who has served as the center’s director since its inception in 1996.

Staffed entirely by volunteers (including Sklar), the center is a one-stop source of information and referral on virtually any issue a retiree may encounter.

“We’re here to help retirees, families and widows” Sklar said. “We have all the forms for all VA benefits,” he added, noting that staff members are on hand to assist with the completion, filing and tracking of that paperwork.

But the center’s services extend far beyond data entry and administrative assistance.

The Support Center works in conjunction with Stuttgart’s Retiree Council (a separate organization whose president, William Torbett, is also a Support Center volunteer), to ensure that the needs of the area’s retirees and widows are being met.

As Torbett wrote in a letter describing the collaborative effort of the two groups, “the Council may be considered the voice of the retired community going upward in the Army chain of command. ... The Center is looking downward to the retirees and their families to see where help is needed and [to provide] assistance purely on a volunteer basis.”

One of the most important aspects of the Support Center’s work is its close coordination with the area’s casualty assistance officers. The center tracks survivors within the 6th Area Support Group footprint (including German widows), and Sklar and his staff are have assisted in virtually every step of the process, from comforting grieving spouses to arranging for proper burials to ensuring that the survivors have access to all benefits for which they are entitled.

The nine retirees who currently staff the Support Center have amassed a cumulative total of more than 350 years of military service, and they average an annual contribution of 6,000 hours of volunteer service.

The motivation to continue this level of service, Sklar said, is simple: “We’re all retirees, and we’d hope there’d be a place like this to take care of our families.”

This article addresses only three of the many veterans-related services and organizations throughout the Stuttgart military community. For more information about additional opportunities for former service members, see the box at left.

A chest full of medals, but no Purple Heart

'Lucky' D-Day veteran emerged without wounds after extensive action in Europe

Story & photo by Rudi Williams
American Forces Press Service

Not only is Walter R. Bieder, 83, a true American hero, he's also one of the luckiest men alive.

A combatant in several bloody battles during World War II, Bieder earned two Silver Star medals and two Bronze Star medals for heroism without getting a scratch.

"God was looking out for me," said Bieder, a retired Parma, Ohio, police officer who now lives in Woodbridge, Va.

An Army private first class when he hit Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944, Bieder was later decorated with the Silver Star "for gallantry in action in the vicinity of Colleville-sur-Mer in Normandy, France," according to the award citation.

Bieder recalls slipping a hand grenade onto the launcher of his M1 rifle and firing the grenade at a machine gun nest. "It went right in front of them," Bieder said.

He was awarded the Bronze Star with V device for valor during ground combat in Belgium in September 1944, and was recommended for a second Bronze Star on New Year's Day 1945 for valor in action near Czechoslovakia.

Bieder earned his second Silver Star while serving with Company E, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, during the Battle of Hurtgen Forest.

Bieder started his trek across the battlefields of World War II when he joined the Army's 1st Infantry Division when the unit was bivouacked near Oran, Africa.

On July 10, 1943, he fought in the invasion of Sicily, and in November 1943 the unit sailed from England to prepare for the D-Day invasion.

"All hell broke loose when we hit Omaha Beach," Bieder said. "The tide was out, so we had a long beach to cross with a lot of obstacles, including land mines. Only four guys from one of our landing craft got out of the landing craft alive."

"When we got on the beach the water was red with blood and bodies all over the beach," he recalled.

Bieder said he would never forget the tears flowing down his company commander's face on D-Day night. "He cried because he said they lied to us," Bieder said. "The beach was supposed to be full of bomb craters, and we were counting on them being there, but there were not any around to use as foxholes."

Bieder said his commander cried because there were only 60 men left out of a reinforced company of more than 200 troops. "We were so battered that we couldn't even take our first objective," the combat hero said, adding that all the unit's tanks had sunk in the surf, "the guys and all."

After fighting across France, Bieder's unit participated in the Battle of the Bulge.

"That was one of the worst winters in Europe's history," he noted.

"Believe me, the Lord was watching over me. At one point, it was so cold and my overcoat was so frozen that when I slipped out of it, the damn thing stood up by itself!"

After returning to the States, Bieder was closemouthed about his wartime experiences.

"I just didn't talk about it," said Bieder, a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7916 in Occoquan, Va.

"A lot of people would ask me questions, and I'd just say, 'I don't want to talk about it.' The only time I ever talked was if I knew it was somebody that understood."

Bieder said there's now a book out about his platoon's exploits, "Until the Victory is Won," by David Allender.



World War II veteran Walter R. Bieder, 83, shows copies of several medals and badges he earned during the war.

New ID card designed to protect vets' information

American Forces Press Service

The Department of Veterans Affairs has designed a new identity card for veterans to help safeguard confidential information while combating identity theft.

"The new identification card ensures veterans' personal information is protected," Veterans Affairs Secretary Anthony J. Principi said in a statement. "It also helps prevent the theft of important benefits and services from veterans that they earned by their service to our country."

The card, formally known as the Veterans Identity Card, will have veterans' photos on the front and identify them as enrollees in the VA's health-care system.

Encrypted on a magnetic tape on the back of the card will be the veteran's Social Security number, date of birth and a control number. The magnetic strip also records whether the veteran has a service-connected disability.

Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the nation. The Federal Trade Commission listed identity theft as the No. 1 fraud reported by consumers in 2003.

Requests from veterans and their congressional representatives were instrumental in bringing about these latest changes, officials said.

"The new VIC ensures the security of veterans' personal information as well as ensuring that only eligible veterans receive the benefits and services they've earned," said Kristin Cunningham of the VA health-care system's business office.

Veterans should request the new card at their local medical center. Processing will take five to seven days once eligibility is verified.

The existing cards will remain valid until veterans receive their new cards, VA officials said.

This story was based on a Department of Veterans Affairs news release. For more about VA-related issues visit www.va.gov.

Rumsfeld: America has much to learn from its veterans

By Samantha L. Quigley
American Forces Press Service

America can learn "so much" from its veterans, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said the day before the United States observed Veterans Day.

"These are people who have demonstrated their patriotism, their courage, their love of freedom, and they're a part of our history," he said in a Nov. 10 interview with The Pentagon Channel. "It's important for people today to know them, to understand them and to appreciate them."

Veterans Day serves as a reminder of all that has come before, Rumsfeld said. It is because of those veterans and the battles they fought that Americans are able to exercise the freedoms we enjoy today.

"It is important that those of us who are involved today think of all the wonderful young men and women out serving across the globe defending our country against the extremists and terrorists," he said.

"[Service members] need to see it in context of our country's history to understand that they are part of something enormously important and critical to our success as a nation," he added.

Rumsfeld said that growing up with a father in the Navy during World War II, "it never crossed my mind that I would do anything other than join the Navy."

With that experience to draw from, he greeted and thanked those serving around the world — including Afghanistan, Iraq, the Horn of Africa and the Asian-Pacific area — and said he had some idea of what they are going through.

"I feel I have a sense of their contribution and sacrifice that they make and the sacrifice that their families make. And ... our country is blessed that they're willing to do that — that they're willing to step forward and say, 'Send me,'" Rumsfeld said.

'These are people who have demonstrated their patriotism, their courage, their love of freedom. It's important for people today to know them, to understand them and to appreciate them.'

Donald Rumsfeld
U.S. Secretary of Defense

From the Nazis of World War II to the communists of the Soviet Union during the Cold War, the country has faced numerous difficulties, Rumsfeld noted.

Today, he said, the country faces another form of tyranny and repression from new players.

"We call it terrorism. In fact, it's probably better characterized as extremists, and terrorism is the weapon of choice that they're using," he said. "So the people have to understand that what [the service members] are doing is different, to be sure. But the purpose is the same."

"The purpose is to see that the American people have an opportunity to live in freedom and get up in the morning and go where they want and say what they want and think what they want, which is precious. It's worth fighting for."

This stories on this page all appeared on the Army News Service Web site (www.army.mil/arnews).

Harvey sworn in as SecArmy

Army News Service

Dr. Francis J. Harvey became the 19th secretary of the Army during a Nov. 19 swearing-in ceremony in the Pentagon.

"This is a great honor for me," Harvey said. "My top priority will be to serve our Soldiers, civilian employees and family members of the active component, Army Reserve and Army National Guard."

The Senate confirmed President George W. Bush's nomination of Harvey Nov. 16

"It's great to have Dr. Harvey on board as our secretary," said Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, Army chief of staff. "Dr. Harvey has a

wealth of experience leading large organizations with diverse work forces, managing major programs and leading technology development. His education and industry experience will serve us well as he leads our Army in this window of strategic opportunity."

As secretary of the Army, Harvey has statutory responsibility for all matters relating to Army manpower, personnel, reserve affairs, installations, environmental issues, weapons systems and equipment acquisition, communications and financial management.

Harvey is also responsible for the department's annual budget (\$98.5 billion this year).

The new secretary leads a work force of over one million active-duty, Army National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers, 220,000 civilian employees and thousands of contractors. He also has stewardship over 15 million acres of land.

Prior to his appointment, Harvey was a business executive whose experience centered on the defense industry.

From 1969 to 1997, he worked for the Westinghouse Corporation, where he served as president of the Electronics Systems Group, president of the Government



Staff Sgt. Carmen L. Burgess

As Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld looks on, Dr. Francis J. Harvey (right), is sworn in as secretary of the Army by Raymond DuBois, director of administration and management.

and Environmental Services Company, and chief operating officer of the \$6 billion Industries and Technology Group.

Most recently, Harvey was a director and vice chairman of Duratek, a company specializing in treating radioactive, hazardous, and other wastes.

During his career, he has been involved in one or more phases of more than 20 major Department of Defense programs.

Harvey earned his doctorate in Metallurgy and Material Sciences from the University of Pennsylvania, and was a White House Fellow with the Department of Defense in the late 1970s.

Harvey succeeds Les Brownlee, who served as the acting Secretary of the Army for the past 18 months.

"I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Secretary Les Brownlee for his leadership and stewardship of the Army over the past 18 months," Schoomaker said.

"I speak for the entire Army family when I say his tireless efforts ... will have an impact on the Army and ensure we remain relevant and ready for decades to come," he said



Gary Sheftick

Soldiers guard the tactical operations center of the 26th Forward Support Battalion, part of the 2nd Unit of Action, 3rd Infantry Division. Brigade combat teams (units of action) throughout the Army are preparing to deploy.

Modular brigades prep for deployment

By Steven Field
Army News Service

The concept of modularity is approaching its first true test as units across the country undergo transformation and prepare for deployments overseas.

With four modular brigades training under the 3rd Infantry Division – and several companies reorganizing and reflagging under the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) – the Army is preparing to send a unit of execution and subordinate brigade combat teams (units of action) into combat, testing the modular "plug-and-play" vision inspired by transformation.

A successful deployment would provide validation for the model that will be applied to each of the ten Army divisions by 2007.

In these upcoming deployments, two BCT (UA)s from the 3rd Infantry Division will fall under the command of the 42nd Infantry Division in north central Iraq when they deploy this winter. The rest of the division is slated to deploy with a unit from the Louisiana Army National Guard to a different part of Iraq.

In the ramp-up to these deployments, the newly reorganized BCT (UA)s have gone through rotations at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, La.

"JRTC was our capstone exercise that culminated all the training we did since we were activated in May 2004," said Maj. Alayne Conway, spokeswoman for the 3rd Infantry Division's 4th BCT (UA).

The story of the 4th BCT (UA) epitomizes the transformation philosophy. The unit had about 21 Soldiers when it was activated, and in six months gained approximately 1,500 Soldiers, garnered new equipment and conducted three major training exercises.

The Army took three different battalions from three different brigades with three different cultures and joined them together as one team, Conway said. The 4th BCT (UA) had to be built from the ground up, and about eight months after its formation it will be deployed to Iraq as part of one of the first modular deployments.

"In six months, we did what a normal unit can expect to do in four to five years," Conway said.

Advancement Via Individual Determination

Patch program puts students on path to success

Story & photos by Hugh C. McBride

Learn a little bit about the many requirements for participation in Patch High School's AVID program – including mandatory enrollment in upper-level classes, maintenance of a minimum grade point average, and regular reports sent home to be signed by every student's parents, to name but a few – and it may come as no surprise to learn the program has an enrollment problem.

The surprise is the *type* of problem: Too many kids want in.

"This class was designed for 20 students and we have 31 right now," said Claire Dickmeyer, who has been teaching PHS's Advancement Via Individual Determination classes for six years.

And should one of those 31 decide to give up his or her spot in the class (not likely, but it does occasionally happen), the seat won't stay empty for long. "We've almost always got a waiting list," Dickmeyer said.

From good to great

Originally a California-based effort to provide academic support for underserved students (see box at bottom right), AVID is now offered in 1,650 schools in 16 countries – including all overseas Department of Defense Dependents Schools.

With an emphasis on organization, motivation and accountability, the program is geared toward the often overlooked "middle" student who may need a boost to get his or her grades from good to great.

Students are taught – and required – to take notes using the "Cornell method," are graded on their ability to maintain thorough records of past progress and upcoming assignments, and are expected to be active participants in small-group tutoring sessions.

In return for their efforts, the students earn a place in the "AVID family" and the confidence that comes from being a part of a successful support network.

"The students take care of each other," Dickmeyer said. "They work together. There's a bond."

Focus on the future

"AVID is for kids who want to go farther, and who have the determination to do something about it," said PHS senior Bethany Schmitt, who has been in the program for three years.

At a time when many of her fellow seniors are scrambling to complete college applications and sweating out the admission process, Schmitt has already been accepted into the University of Oregon – an achievement that she says is a direct result of her participation in AVID. "This is more than just a class," Schmitt said. "It prepares you for the 'real world' after high school."

For the vast majority of AVID students, that "real world" includes higher education.

According to statistics at www.avidonline.org, 95 percent of all AVID students attend college (the national average for all U.S. high school students is 60 percent).

At Patch, the search for the right school starts on a student's first day in the program.

Second-year AVID student Scott Csrnko admitted that, as a freshman, he didn't understand why he was being compelled to research and write to institutions of higher learning.

One year later, though, he and his fellow sophomores are "really into learning all about colleges," he said.

The change in attitude may be due in part



Patch High School AVID students Julie Johnson, Kim Knowles and Madelina Brown (left to right, above) and Joe Piroso and Scott Csrnko (left to right, below) collaborate to solve math problems during small-group work sessions Nov. 17. The AVID program places a premium on cooperative learning and peer support.

AVID is for kids who want to go farther, and who have the determination to do something about it.

Bethany Schmitt

Patch High School AVID student

to a year's maturity, but Csrnko also credits the tangible results the students have received from their efforts.

For example, he said, "I wrote to the University of Colorado at Boulder, and they wrote back and said they want to set me up with a tour of the school over the summer."

In addition to being required to write to colleges for information, the students also learn how to research the best post-secondary schools for them and how to find and apply for financial aid.

But in the eyes of Susi Edgar, one of the program's four adult tutors, the most important college lesson AVID imparts is not "how to," but "I can."

"I don't think there's a kid in here who doesn't think he or she can go to college," Edgar said.

Tools for life

In addition to aiming for college, AVID students are also expected to excel in high school.

For example, all juniors in the Patch program take Honors English, and all seniors take Advanced Placement English and History.

(In addition to the high school program, PHS also offers seventh- and eighth-grade AVID classes – both of

which are taught by Dickmeyer. All AVID middle-school students are required to study a foreign language, and the eighth-graders also take algebra.)

To help the students succeed on both the short-term and long-term goals, the program's collaborative lessons emphasize note-taking and organizational skills alongside subject-specific instruction.

"I'd like the students to take with them something they can use all their lives – like study skills," said tutor Marty Cayford.

From the feedback Dickmeyer gets from AVID graduates, it sounds as though the message is getting through. "Every year I have kids tell me 'we're still in college today because of the AVID methodology,'" she said.

Graduates aren't the only ones to sing the program's praises. Sophomore Dan Kennedy, a second-year AVID student, said other students and teachers have noted his progress. "The good thing about AVID is that in most of your other classes, you're the model student," he said.

For the college-bound Schmitt, the only aspect of AVID that isn't thought-provoking is the decision to enroll. "I don't understand why any student wouldn't want to take AVID," she said.



From California to the world

Advancement Via Individual Determination was created in 1980 by Mary Catherine Swanson of San Diego's Clairemont High School to provide a support network for the large number of inner-city students who were enrolling in suburban schools under federal desegregation mandates.

Beginning with one high school and 32 students, the program now serves over 92,000 students in more than 1,650 middle and high schools in 24 states and 16 countries. More than 30,000 AVID graduates have enrolled in college.

For more about AVID visit www.avidonline.org or call Patch High School at 430-7191/civ. 0711-680-7191.

source: www.avidonline.org

PHS's TATU students support 'Smokout'

Story and photo by Mildred Green



TATU member Crystal Gray shows students a model of a mouth diseased from the use of tobacco products, pointing out the cancer lesions and tar stains.

In support of the Great American Smokeout, Patch High School's Teens Against Tobacco Use visited Robinson Barracks Elementary School Nov. 18 to spread awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco use.

The TATU students ate lunch with RB Elementary students before visiting fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade classrooms. During the class visits, they performed for the students and shared with them the damage tobacco products, like cigarettes and smokeless tobacco, can do.

The PHS students presented skits and shared pictures and display items of body parts – such as the heart, lungs and liver – that had been damaged by tobacco products.

The TATU members also passed out tobacco trivia worksheets, reviewed correct answers with students, and took the time to answer students' questions.

One item that prompted many appalled faces and comments was a jar of tar equal to the approximate amount of tar consumed in a person's lungs after one year of smoking.

Students were almost in unison as they "eewed."

TATU member Courtney Kennedy said she believed the effort would be a success if only one elementary student was reached. "If we can just save one person, I will feel fulfilled," she said.

Kennedy, a junior, said she believes that it is imperative that children learn early about the harmful effects caused by tobacco products.

Joe Morrow, who has been a member of TATU for three

years, said he believes in the organization.

Morrow said that he joined TATU because he hoped to be a positive influence in kids' lives.

"Being a role model is very important," he said.

Kim Baker, RB Elementary's school nurse, said the younger students do look up to the teens. The children can relate better to the TATU students because they see the teens more as friends instead of lecturing adults, she said.

TATU is a nationwide extracurricular program that began as an initiative of the American Lung Association, said Sue Schmidt, PHS nurse.

According to the American Lung Association Web site, www.lungusa.org, the group is a "peer-teaching tobacco control program aimed at deterring youngsters from taking up smoking."

PHS began its program six years ago, Schmidt said, noting that the local effort has grown a great deal since its inception. For example, she said, a membership limit had to be set this year because of the overwhelming interest in TATU.

PHS's 12 TATU members meet once a week throughout the fall to prepare for the Great American Smokeout.

Sponsored by the American Cancer Society, the GAS is held annually on the third Thursday in November, Schmidt said, with the goal of encouraging smokers to kick the habit – if only for one day.

Through the TATU effort, Schmidt said, she believes that the children (both high school students and elementary counterparts) become real advocates. "It's fun to see them mature and really advocate for a non-smoking lifestyle," she said.

DoD schools address free/reduced-price meals, student e-mail access, online survey

Meals program

The Department of Defense Education Activity has announced that many more students in the Department of Defense Dependents Schools are now eligible for free or reduced-price meals at DoDDS schools.

Under previous regulations, a family's off-post housing allowance was counted as income; as a result, many off-post families did not qualify for the free or reduced-price meals.

With this allowance now eliminated from the income calculation, DoDDS is encouraging families who do not live on post to apply or reapply for free or reduced-price meals.

For more information on the National School Lunch Program visit the United States Department of Agriculture's Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services Web site at www.fns.usda.gov.

Survey

DoDEA launched its 2004 customer satisfaction survey Nov. 1. The survey is open to all DoDEA students in grades four through 12, the parents or sponsors of all DoDEA students and all DoDEA teachers.

The survey, which is scheduled to remain online until Feb. 28, can be accessed by visiting www.DoDEA.edu and clicking the Customer Satisfaction Survey link. Individuals who do not have access to the online survey may get a print version of the survey from any DoDEA school.

The findings of the survey – including the participation rates of all eligible groups – will be published in Spring 2005.

E-mail

DoDDS-Europe has purchased a student e-mail system based on the commercially available Gaggie mail. Many schools are already connected and using the service.

The student system includes features that block pornographic e-mail and offensive words and automatically monitor and review student messages.

The student e-mail system was purchased to promote educational use of e-mail, facilitate classroom e-mail projects, provide a vehicle for students to transport electronic files between school and home, and maintain contact with their parents when they are deployed.

Information above from DoDEA and DoDDS news releases. For more about DODEA visit www.www.odedodea.edu. For more about DoDDS visit www.eu.dodea.edu.

Germany's many Christmas markets offer samples of season's splendor

The Citizen

It's time again to stroll through your favorite Weihnachtsmarkt (or Christkindlmarkt), known to most Americans as a Christmas market.

If you haven't had the chance to enjoy a German Christmas market, take the opportunity this year to experience centuries old traditions and the warm and inviting atmosphere of the German holiday season.

Stuttgart

- This is one of the largest Christmas markets in Europe, and has been a Stuttgart tradition since 1692.
- Located in Stuttgart's city center (near the Königstrasse, a short walk from the Hauptbahnhof), the market includes a village of more than 200 stands.
- Sales booths offer a plethora of holiday-related items – including wooden toys, Christmas ornaments, gingerbread, roasted almonds, grilled sausage and of course mulled wine.
- Younger attendees may be most impressed by the children's railway, merry-go-round and fairy tale land.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 26 to Dec. 23 – Mondays to Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Sundays, 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Augsburg

- Conducted for more than five centuries, this is regarded as one of the oldest and most beautiful Christmas markets in Bavaria. Booths are set up at the market square in front of the Renaissance Rathaus.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 26 to Dec. 24 – Mondays to Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sundays, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Baden-Baden

- Against the picturesque backdrop of the Kurhaus and the Colonnades lit up by thousands of lights, this famous spa town's Christkindlmarkt offers a variety of choirs, orchestras and bands to put visitors from around the world in the Christmas mood.
- More than 50 beautifully decorated stands will be offering an extensive array of products – including crafts and toys, artistic Tiffany products and wood carvings.
- Another traditional attraction is a "living crèche" with lambs, sheep and a shepherd.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 25 to Dec. 21 – noon to 9 p.m.

Bonn

- The impressive illuminated façades on Münsterplatz and along neighboring streets form the festive backdrop for Bonn's Christmas market.
- Beginning Dec. 1 the beautiful old town hall is transformed into an enormous Advent calendar, with one more window lit up each day. Additional attractions include Christmas concerts and a daily program of events.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 18 to Dec. 23 – Sundays to Fridays, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Dresden

- Dating to 1434, Dresden's Striezelmarkt is Germany's oldest Christmas market. Its name derives from Hefestriezel, a sweet delicacy that is still enjoyed centuries later is still enjoyed.
- The world's tallest Christmas pyramid (14 meters) is one of the attractions that gives this market its inimitable appeal.
- Shoppers love Dresden for its treasure trove of traditional handicrafts, including carved wooden items from the Erzgebirge mountains (pyramids, incense burners and decorative Christmas arches), blue printed articles and pottery from Lusatia, intricate handmade lace and handblown Christmas tree decorations.
- Highlights are the Stollen (Cake) Festival on the Saturday before the second Sunday in Advent and the Pyramid Festival on the Saturday before the third Sunday in Advent.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 25 to Dec. 24 – Sundays to Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Christmas Eve, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Esslingen

- One of the smaller Christmas markets, but well worth visiting (and just a short drive from Stuttgart), Esslingen's event is a "Medieval Weihnachtsmarkt."
- Booths are set up from the Rathausplatz to Post-michelmarkt.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 25 to Dec. 22 – Daily, 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Frankfurt

- The Frankfurt Christmas market has become one of the best known in all of Germany due to its size (more than 200 businesses), the historical background of the "Römerberg," and the many events associated with it.
- Of course, no visit to this market is complete without stopping to see the symbol of the season, a 30-meter high Christmas tree imported from Norway.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 24 to Dec. 22 – Mondays to Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sundays, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Heidelberg

- Sales, food and beverage booths are set up along Hauptstrasse on Kornmarkt, Marketplatz around the Heiliggeistkirche in front of city hall (which is illuminated daily) and on Universitätsplatz.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 24 to Dec. 22 – Daily, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Ludwigsburg

- This very special and romantic Christmas market has more than 160 sales, food and beverage booths set up at the pictures market in the heart of Ludwigsburg, just a short drive from Stuttgart.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 24 to Dec. 22 – Mondays to Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Sundays, 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Munich

- Held on the Marienplatz in the heart of the city.
- Among many attractions are a crèche with almost life-sized figures, and the daily singing of Christmas carols from the city hall balcony.
- Children can enjoy free activities every day in the market's "heaven workshop."
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 26 to Dec. 24 – Mondays to Fridays, 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., Sundays, 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Christmas Eve, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Rothenburg

- This market dates back to the 15th century and is described by "those in the know" as one of Germany's most atmospheric Christmas markets.
- The market is held beneath the twin towers and the illuminated windows of St. Jacobs Church.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 25 to Dec. 23 – Mondays to Fridays, 12:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Sundays, 10:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Tübingen

- The city of Tübingen hosts this annual three-day market on the third weekend of Advent (Dec. 10 to 12 this year).
- **Shopping hours:** Dec. 10 and 11, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Dec. 12, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Ulm

- More than 120 sales, food and beverage booths will be set up in front of the Ulmer Münster, the famous cathedral in the historical part of town.
- **Shopping hours:** Nov. 24 to Dec. 22 – Mondays to Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Sundays, 11 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

For more visit www.germany-christmas-market.org.uk.



courtesy City of Stuttgart

The Stuttgart Weihnachtsmarkt is one of the biggest – and considered one of the most beautiful – in Europe. Open Nov. 26 to Dec. 23 this year, the Stuttgart event is one of many markets that offer guests and residents a chance to sample the many splendors of the season.



Holiday crowds can pose personal security risks. Enjoy the celebration, but be smart about safety.

Stay safe when out & about

- Maintain a low profile. Your conduct and mannerisms should not attract attention.
- Don't go out in large groups. Smaller groups are much less likely to be noticed.
- Dress to blend in. Certain types of clothing (such as tennis shoes and baseball caps) may identify you as an American.
- Limit alcohol intake. Try not to overindulge, and plan transportation home in advance.
- Be alert to your surroundings. If you think you're being followed, go to a secure area (the German Polizei often have a stations at large events).

For additional tips call the 6th Area Support Group safety office at 421-2752/civ. 0711-729-2752.

Area offers many resources to help sufferers overcome holiday stresses, depression

Though the holiday season is traditionally one of joy and togetherness, stress and depression don't take days off. Reduced hours of daylight, concerns over deployments, and the pressures of making "perfect" memories – these are but a few of the realities that may prompt the onset of what are euphemistically called "the holiday blues."

Whether they are merely inconvenient or downright debilitating, holiday stress and depression have one thing in common: both are beatable. In Stuttgart and Garmisch, a number of resources are available for community members whose holiday season – or any other time of year – is plagued by these problems. Below are a few starting points on the path back to health:

Army Community Service

- In Stuttgart: Patch Barracks, building 2307. For information call 430-7176/civ. 0711-680-7176.
- In Garmisch: Artillery Kaserne, building 203. For information call 442-2777/civ. 08821-759-777 or e-mail patricia.howe@garmisch.army.mil.
- A wide range of services is available, including short-term counseling, stress management and parenting classes.

Chaplains

- In Stuttgart, the 6th Area Support Group Chaplain's Office is on the fourth floor of Patch Barracks' Washington Center. For more information call 430-5000/civ. 0711-680-5000.
- In Garmisch, the chapel is on Sheridan Kaserne. For details call 440-2819/civ. 08821-750-819 or e-mail ronald.benzig@garmisch.army.mil.

Stuttgart Army Health Clinic

- Patch Barracks, building 2300. Open Mondays to Fridays, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- For information or an appointment call 430-8610/civ. 0711-680-8610.
- Services include evaluation, treatment and referral, if necessary, for mental health issues.

Stuttgart Wellness Center

- Patch Barracks, building 2307. Open Mondays to Fridays, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- For details call 430-4073/civ. 0711-680-4073.

Tricare

- In Stuttgart, visit Patch Barracks building 2300 (behind the clinic). For details call 430-8514/civ. 0711-680-8514.
- In Garmisch call 0800-181-8505.
- Allows for up to eight visits to off-post mental health providers without a doctor's referral.

Don't let your holiday memories go up in smoke

Every year, careless acts cause hundreds of household fires. Smoking in bed, unmonitored cooking, unsupervised children with matches and lighters and the misuse of supplemental heating equipment account for many of these fires.

Fire safety is essential all year – but the holidays can be especially dangerous. Protect your holiday memories: Keep fire safety at the forefront of all holiday plans.

Christmas trees

- Choose a fresh tree and secure it in a sturdy place.
- If using an artificial tree, make sure it is flame-retardant.
- Keep live trees moist and away from heat sources.
- **Never** place lit candles on a tree.

Candles

- Candle fires increase during the holiday season.
- Don't leave children unattended in a room with lighted candles.
- Keep candles, matches and lighters out of reach of children.
- Remember: The use of open flame candles is prohibited in all government facilities (except community chapels during religious services).

